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20, 5-8 p.m.; free. Call 473-2873.

EVENING OF POETRY with Ann Stafford *Un Mediterranean Air, The Descent*, professor of English at Cal State Northridge and literary critic. Beyond Baroque Foundation, Old Venice City Hall, 681 Venice Blvd., Venice; Fri., March 20, 8 p.m.; free. Call 822-3006.

Events

STAMP EXPO '81/SOUTH, an auction held by Western Philatelics, will offer lists of rare stamps, limited edition Commemorative Covers marking the launching of the U.S. Space Shuttle, a display from the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing and post office facilities representing 40 countries. Many free attractions are included, ranging from souvenir cards and full-color collectors' programs to films, slide shows, lectures and appraisals of collections. A special set of stamps honoring the Easter holiday will be available for the first time, issued from the Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands will bring out a special set which honors Walt Disney. Anaheim Marriott Hotel, 700 Convention Way (opposite the Anaheim Convention Center), Anaheim; Fri., March 20, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sat., March 21, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sun., March 22, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; $2.75, senior citizens $1.25, juniors 12-16 $1, children under 12 free. Validated free parking. Call 997-6496.

THE UNCOMMON MARKET, a multi-cultural shopping tour, will cover a variety of ethnic neighborhoods and shops in the central L.A. area in honor of the city's bicentennial. Information will be supplied giving recipes and food descriptions so that items may be purchased for home use during stops at Armenian, Greek, Argentinian and Korean neighborhoods. Sat., March 21, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; $9, plus $4.98 for the bus. Call W.L.A. Community College Services for registration, 836-7110, ext. 274 and 275.

L.A. LITE MARATHON, an event which expects to serve as the qualifying race for the Olympics in 1983, hosts a number of well-known athletes and runners. Runners in seven categories will compete on the 26-mile, 285-yard course starting at the Police Academy in Elysian Park, continuing along Riverside Dr. to Griffith Park, past the zoo, along Forest Lawn Dr. to Barham Blvd. and back to the Academy. Trophies, medals and raffle prizes for the entrants have been donated by L.A. businesses. L.A. Police Academy, Academy Rd., Elysian Park; Sat., March 21, registration at 7 a.m., race at 8 a.m. Entry $7. Call 246-5613.

CONFERENCE ON WOMEN'S CULTURE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY 1880-1980 will examine social issues of concern to women and acknowledge women's diverse and common contributions to public policy through the organizations they have formed and supported. Speakers include Esther Broner, Kathryn Kish Sklar, Mary Jane Hewitt, Dorothy Healey, Vera Davis and Genora Dollinger. The Woman's Building, 1727 Spring St., downtown; Sat., March 21, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Sun., March 22, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Free child care is available. Donation $5 a day, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Call 221-6161. (See Good Times Page for more details.)

36TH ANNUAL BAY CITIES JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER PURIM CARNIVAL features entertainment for all ages, a costume parade, game booths with prizes, music and traditional foods. The public is invited to come in costume. Israel Levin Center, 201 Ocean Front Walk, Venice; Sun., March 22, noon-4 p.m. Call 828-3433.

L.A. RAMS VS. THE INGLEWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT in a benefit basketball game to raise funds for the Inglewood YMCA youth program. Half-time highlights will include live entertainment, singers, a karate demonstration and a gymnastics review. The Rams will hold an autograph-signing session. Inglewood High School Gymnasium, 231 S. Grevillea Ave., Inglewood; Wed., March 25, 7:30 p.m.; $3, children $2. Call 671-7615.

THE CANDIDATES FORUM, in which candidates for the offices of Mayor, City Council, Board of Education, City Attorney, Controller and College Board of Trustees discuss the topic "The Role Students Play in the Electoral and Lawmaking Process of State and Local Government." L.A. City College Student Center, 855 N. Vermont Ave.; Wed., March 25, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Call 661-9141, ext. 305 or 306.

Free Fun

SING L.A. SING, a community sing presented by the Performing Arts Division of the Cultural Affairs Department of the City of L.A. A variety show follows. L.A. Breakfast Club, 3201 River side Dr.; Sat., March 21, 7 p.m. (Arrive early and bring a picnic.) Call 485-2437.

MUSIC BY AMERICAN COMPOSERS will be performed by the San Fernando Chorale, a 35-member group which draws its membership from the Sylmar, San Fernando, Chatsworth, Woodland Hills and Tujunga areas, featuring works by Aaron Copland, Charles Ives, Meredith Wilson and others. Barnsdall Park's Gallery Theatre, 4800 Hollywood Blvd; Sat., March 21, 8 p.m. Call 485-2437.

SUNDAY OPEN SUNDAY, drop-in workshops for the entire family continue, with instructor Matthew Thomas supervising the fabrication of "Thai Fighter" kites. Barnsdall Park's Junior Arts Center, 4800 Hollywood Blvd.; Sun., March 22, 2-4 p.m. Call 485-2433.

The Decline *continued from page 5*

Darby (who recently succumbed to a self-induced OD) comes across as pathetic, rather than heroically self-destructive.

The rare moments in which the film is genuinely unsettling arise not from the punks' fondness for the objectionable and the outrageous, not from the contrived rhetoric or rough horseplay, but from the bottomless indifference, frustration and incoherent anger one occasionally glimpses *beneath* it all.

In one stark black and white sequence, Spheeris talks to an utterly poised, close-cropped head with the face of a 12-year-old and a certain cynicism in his eyes. He dutifully recites his hatred of the hippies, cops and poseurs who populate the punk demonology, and then starts groping with chilling incoherence for the roots of his disaffection: "With me, it comes from . . . living in this city . . . seeing all the ugly old people, the buses." In another telling scene Spheeris asks the band Black Flag how they get along with the hippies with whom they share an abandoned church. "They're real mellow. Mellow dudes," says the band. "Even when they're pissed off they want to sit down and talk about it. They smoke so much pot they're neutralized."

It is at times like this that one wishes Spheeris had tracked her subject out of the claustrophobic confines of the punk underworld and into the suffocating, sun-struck parent culture against which the kids are rebelling so haplessly. One of the remarkable things about L.A.'s punk subculture, which is perhaps the most vigorous in the country, is the fact that it's happening here in mellow, prosperous SoCal, a sociosphere vastly different from the one that spawned the British punk revolt and yet equally stultifying in some ways, its smooth, complacent surface masking deep currents of unease within. The band X's song/poems of decayed hope and alienation have a uniquely Los Angeles flavor, and the recent rise of the mutant beachpunk subculture, comprised largely of school kids from the affluent seaside suburbs, is ominous in itself. There are larger truths about the California lifestyle and America itself to be discovered in the punk story, but save for occasional forays, Spheeris didn't go in search of them — one of the few disappointing things about her film.

As it is, she relies chiefly on Claude Bessy of the late and lamented *Slash* magazine to interpret the phenomenon for us. The gleeful French anarchist does a rather good job, reading out a series of letters to his magazine, including a stinging, articulate demolition of the no-nukes movement and its adherents, who, says the writer, would be the first to whine "if they couldn't switch on their fucking stereos." Comments Bessy: "That's the way young people feel today. People are grooving on ugly vibes," which would seem to be the appropriate conclusion.

Ah yes, let's not overlook the music, because this is primarily a musical and as such is pretty riveting, certainly more accomplished and coherent than Don Letts' 1977 *Punk Movie*, the closest thing to *The Decline* currently available. Three of the seven bands featured here no longer exist, which lends an air of historical artifact to the proceedings. Premier L.A. pogo band X steal the show imagewise (thanks largely to the angelic, detached presence of guitarist Billy Zoom) and musically, ripping through such Chuck Berry-meets-Pistols-meets-Doors favorites as "Nausea" and "Johny Hit and Run Paulene." Claude Bessy's relatively obscure and long-defunct Catholic Discipline also turn in a creditable performance, especially with the song "Barbee Doll Lust," which fairly bristles with disturbing images and metaphors. The Germs' rendition of "Manimal" is Theatre of the Grotesque, ugly, bloated Darby Crash falling all over the stage and growling with a pathetic anguish that is painful to behold.

As for the rest: this writer must confess an ingrained indifference to fast noise bands of the Black Flag/Circle Jerks ilk, and those who share my feeling that such bands should be seen, not heard, can take consolation in the fact that they put on a spectacular show, tearing around the stage and sometimes booting overexcited fans in the face. One shudders at the risks Spheeris and crew must have taken to get some of the close-ups, which seem to have been shot from the very midst of the pogo melee and are all the more dramatic for it.

Since only X, of all the bands featured here, has anything approaching above-ground visibility, one doubts *The Decline*'s long-term commercial viability, especially outside Los Angeles. Which is a great pity. Although one can find more evidence of declining Western civilization in most editions of the evening news, Penelope Spheeris' curious documentary provides an interesting reminder of the direction in which we're heading. ■

Working Women *Continued from page 8*

LOS ANGELES-ORANGE COUNTY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (LAOCOC), AFL-CIO
724 S. Parkview
L.A.; 387-7281
David Sickler, Coordinator
If you are interested in possibly unionizing but are not sure which union to contact, this organization will refer you to the appropriate unions.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY FEDERATION OF LABOR
2130 W. 9th St.
L.A.; 381-5611
This group also has information on all unions in L.A. County.

INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, CENTER FOR LABOR RESEARCH & EDUCATION
Bunche Hall, UCLA
L.A. 90024; 825-9602
This is not the place to call for referral to a specific union, but they will provide general information on areas of labor relations. They sponsor conferences and workshops on current labor issues.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY & MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES (AFSCME)
District Council No. 36
3932 Wilshire Blvd.
L.A. 90010; 386-7941
This is one of the largest public employee unions in the AFL-CIO. They represent employees in the public and non-profit sectors, excluding federal employees. About 4,000 clerical workers in L.A., as well as librarians and blue collar workers, are affiliated. AFSCME is heavily involved in the "comparable worth" issue, as well as safety issues such as the health hazards connected with video display terminals used in word processing.

COALITION OF LABOR UNION WOMEN (C.L.U.W.)
2501 S. Hill St.
L.A. 90007; 749-6161
Ruth Miller, president
Although this is not a union, it is an organization comprised of women and men union members who work within the framework of their own unions to further the special concerns of women workers. Some of the issues of greatest concern are pregnancy benefits, labor law reform, child care, occupational health and safety and affirmative action.

AMALGAMATED CLOTHING AND TEXTILE WORKERS UNION
2501 S. Hill St.
L.A. 90007; 749-6161
Ruth Miller, Assistant Manager

LOS ANGELES CITY SUPERVISORS AND SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION
816 S. Figueroa St., Room 400
L.A. 90017; 485-6885
Contact person: Genevieve Vigil
This association represents the blue and white collar city employees who work in a supervisory capacity. They are the certified bargaining agent for these workers but are not affiliated with an AFL-CIO organization. An offshoot of this union is P.O.W.E.R. (Professional Office Workers for Effective Representation), which is seeking to become the certified bargaining agent for the non-supervisory city clerical workers.

RETAIL CLERKS UNION
Local No. 770
2975 Wilshire Blvd.
L.A. 90010; 487-7070
Local No. 1442
1410 2nd St.
Santa Monica 90406; 395-9977
Represents grocery, drug and discount store employees, as well as "professional" workers (computer operators, word processors, accountants, bookkeepers) and a small number of "non-professional" office workers. ■

Poetry

THE LATE SHOW

Everyone's young.
Your mother's wearing
a pleated swimsuit,
her lipstick fresh
and edible. She
is thin, and men
want her. Your
father's there,
just out of the Navy,
a sweetness and bravado
about him you never saw.
He's quiet, uses shaving
lotion, and girls like him.
They both smoke. Cigarettes
are not dangerous yet,
just mysterious and fun.

No one coughs or runs out
of jokes. Uncle Jack's
there, washing his hair
in the lake, splashing,
making goony faces while
motorboats buzz by.
Suicide nowhere in sight.
All the collies are alive.
Candy, the fair one,
still has four legs
and runs across the lawn.
Watch this show till
they slam the test pattern
grid behind them like
a screen door, locking
themselves in. . . .
but you're already snoring.

—Amy Gerstler

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